

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
**Division of Housing Policy Development**

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December 21, 2004

Mr. Richard A. Haffey  
County Executive Officer  
County of Nevada  
950 Maidu Avenue  
Nevada City, CA 95959

Dear Mr. Haffey:

**RE: Review of the County of Nevada's Adopted Housing Element**

Thank you for submitting Nevada County's housing element adopted October 5, 2004 and received for review on October 13, 2004. The Department is required to review adopted housing elements and report the findings to the locality pursuant to Government Code Section 65585(h). The review was facilitated by conversations with Ms. Suzanne Smith, Senior Planner, in October 2004.

As you know, the Department's May 6, 2004 review found the County's revised draft element addressed the statutory requirements of housing element law. As the adopted element is substantially the same as the draft, the Department is pleased to find the adopted element in compliance with State housing element law (Article 10.6 of the Government Code).

The Department appreciates the County's leadership and efforts in addressing housing needs, including a variety of realistic strategies maximizing land resources and guiding development where infrastructure is available. The Department particularly commends the County's specific commitments to rezone lands, reduce fees and relax development standards for multifamily development, to amend zoning and allow mixed-use, establish minimum densities and discourage single-family uses in multifamily zones.

The Department wishes Nevada County success in implementing its housing element and land-use programs and looks forward to following the County's progress through the annual general plan reports pursuant to Government Code Section 65400. Also, for your information, recently enacted legislation (Chapter 706, Statutes of 2002 and Chapter 10, Statutes of 2004; Government Code Section 65863) requires Nevada County to ensure its inventory of adequate sites can accommodate its share of the regional housing need throughout the planning period. Further, Government Code Section 65863(b) prohibits local governments from lowering a residential density used in determining adequate sites under its housing element unless the locality makes certain findings.

In addition, the County is in compliance with State housing element law, which is one of the threshold requirements for an innovative new program that rewards local governments for approving affordable workforce housing. The Workforce Housing Program, funded by Proposition 46, provides grant funds to eligible local governments for every qualifying unit permitted, beginning calendar year 2004. Grant awards can be used to fund any capital asset project, including transportation or park improvements. More specific information about the program is available on the Department's website at <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/>.

The Department appreciates the hard work of your staff, specifically Ms. Smith. If the Department can assist the Nevada County in implementing the housing element, please contact Paul Mc Dougall, of our staff, at (916) 322-7995.

In accordance with requests pursuant to the Public Records Act, the Department is forwarding copies of this letter to the persons and organizations listed below.

Sincerely,



Cathy E. Creswell  
Deputy Director

cc: Randy Wilson, Planning Director, County of Nevada  
Suzanne Smith, Senior Planner, County of Nevada  
Mark Stivers, Senate Committee on Housing & Community Development  
Suzanne Ambrose, Supervising Deputy Attorney General, AG's Office  
Terry Roberts, Governor's Office of Planning and Research  
Nick Cammarota, California Building Industry Association  
Marcia Salkin, California Association of Realtors  
Marc Brown, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation  
Rob Weiner, California Coalition for Rural Housing  
John Douglas, AICP, Civic Solutions  
Deanna Kitamura, Western Center on Law and Poverty  
S. Lynn Martinez, Western Center on Law and Poverty  
Alexander Abbe, Law Firm of Richards, Watson & Gershon  
Michael G. Colantuono, Colantuono, Levin & Rozell, APC  
Ilene J. Jacobs, California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc.  
Richard Marcantonio, Public Advocates